

## Will the League of Nations Put an End to War?

The American Press Divides—Some Papers Say Yes, Others Doubtful—Its Effect on America Discussed

WIND and weather permitting, President Wilson will be back on the shores of the United States within the next twenty-four hours. With him he brings an offering to the country in the form of twenty-six articles of the league of nations.

The country has already begun to look the gift horse in the mouth. The President has asked that the nation be silent until he has had an opportunity to explain. But despite his injunction there has been much comment pro and con.

Is this proposed league, as Josephus Daniels stated a week ago, "almost as simple as one of the parables of Jesus and almost as illuminating and uplifting"? Is it, as the President himself has declared, "a union of wills which cannot be resisted and which, I dare say, no nation will run the risk of attempting to resist"? Or is it what Senator Poinsett has termed it, in spite of the President's injunction to silence, "a delegation and transfer of sovereign powers to an alien agency"?

Are we "facing an abyss" to which the American people should not be led "blindfolded"? Secretary Daniels has said that "if this consummation of a world league had failed, the war would have been fought in vain, and the lives given would not have won a glory which can never fade." Which Senator Poinsett has contradicted. "We are now asked to avoid war," said the Senator at the end of his speech before the Senate—

by multiplying immeasurably the cause of war and by surrendering to a heterogeneous league of diverse races our sovereign rights and privileges. By such a course the independence which was preserved by the patriotism of our people and the heroism of our soldiers in the fighting which has just been concluded will be surrendered and the guarantees of peace which victory has afforded us will be mortgaged to every nation in the world."

On the other hand, when President Wilson saw the members of the press after the league had been drafted, Clinton W. Gilbert in a dispatch to "The New York Evening Sun" says he was—

"in a mellow, jesting mood," and "unbent as he had never unbent before, and talked gayly even about the personalities of the conference. He evidently was happy at the result. He hopes to win enthusiastic support for the league from the American public on his present trip."

Mr. Gilbert goes on to boldly assert that the league is not a war preventative. "The thing," he writes—

"is not what Mr. Wilson had in mind when he made his speeches in Washington. Much of the idealism has evidently evaporated. As a mere question of practicality it was impossible to realize fully the things Wilson pictured in his speeches. For example, there will be war. The constitution of the league recognizes this fact and provides what to do in case of war. President Wilson recognizes there will be war. The French are so fearful of war that they are dissatisfied with the provisions of the league for France's safety."

"The New York Times" believes that a momentous, "perhaps the most momentous forward step in the history of civilization has been taken, declaring:

"The hopes of many generations are to be realized. It is no somnambulism, no 'barren idealism' to believe that this associated peace force of the world will work. The consensus of will and power was all that was ever wanting. The years 1914 to 1918 have awakened the associated conscience of mankind. It is not worth while to keep up the forms of social polity, it is not worth while to live, if the treacheries and horrors of that time are to be allowed again. At last, self-preservation has beaten particularism, jealousy and desire for aggrandizement. We march without too keen a sense of its majesty the turning point, the renaissance, the saving of civilization."

President Wilson's injunction to Congress to avoid public discussion of the league of nations covenant until after the personal explanation of the various

articles seem to have extended to a certain extent to the press of the country, which, for the most part, is reluctant to express an opinion of a document of such tremendous scope and importance. Aside from the inevitable question of whether such an agreement will work and the inevitable difference of opinion regarding its infringement upon our own Constitution, and the matter of how much of our individual rights we will be compelled to sacrifice in an "entangling alliance" for what is considered by some as a doubtful return, the national editorial page, as a whole, has heralded the twenty-six articles as a carefully planned and monumental piece of work—a work worthy of careful consideration and not to be scoffed at lightly. Many editors agree with Josephus Daniels that the end of war is in sight, or at least, that a long stride has been made toward the ultimate goal. Admittedly the draft is still in a preliminary form, submitted for preliminary discussion to the peoples of the world, but still, to quote "The Boston Herald," "it may well raise high the hopes of humanity."

There is only one way, according to "The Springfield Republican," to tell whether the new agreement will work—and that is by experience and, therefore, "let the experiment be made." But if we try it, there is a definite issue, as pointed out by "The Philadelphia North American": "Shall America surrender a certain part of her absolute sovereignty in return for the cooperative protection of civilization?" In the judgment of the same journal a peremptory refusal "would be an act of recklessness." But in the opinion of "The St. Louis Globe-Democrat" just as the league draft creates no military power "it demands the surrender of no material sovereignty." According to others, as expressed by "The Atlanta Constitution," the cant about "entangling alliances" belongs to another page of history, because "we are involved and inextricably involved in not only European affairs but the affairs of the whole world, and it is inevitable that we must forever remain so."

In framing the covenant "The Baltimore American" observes that "practically all the diplomatic and international experiences of the world have been drafted upon," and "The Commercial Appeal," of Memphis, believes that "after a hasty reading one sees that the plan is modelled chiefly along old lines"—so much so that "The Boston Evening Transcript" sees in the document merely a setting up of a new balance of power "with America as the new ally." "It is," says "The Asheville Citizen," "as the President described it, a 'very human document.'" "The Portland Press" remains skeptical, remarking: "It is said to point the way to eternal peace. Who knows if it does not point the way to perpetual war?"

Below are quoted the reactions from the press outside of New York divided into two main divisions, those which deal with the effectiveness of the league plan and those which deal with the effect its adoption would have upon America.

## Will It Abolish War?

## I. It Will

## The Indianapolis News:

We think that it is clear that with the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan bound together by these covenants the chance of war would be greatly lessened.

## The Charlotte Observer:

The anti-war fence built around the protected Powers appears to be horse-high and pig-tight. It seems to be so complete a guarantee of protection from war that its membership is likely to embrace all the eligibles of the world, and there appears to be small obstruction to eligibility.

## The Baltimore Sun:

No man of common sense will believe for a moment that a league of nations, whether formed in accordance with the proposed constitution made public recently in Paris or in any other way, is going to bring along the millennium in our time,



—From Tebelspalter, Zurich

## Homeward Bound

make human nature angelic in a twinkling or make wars impossible. And yet no man, unless a confirmed cynic or a hide-bound partisan, can study the plans of the proposed league without being convinced that a great, perhaps an epochal, advance has been made toward world peace and world betterment, and the elimination of age-old evils and race hatreds and the ethics of the jungle in international affairs.

## The Washington Herald:

The triumph of the moral forces of

civilization, an epoch-making victory of the forces of good over the forces of evil, of the principles of peace and right over war and might, and of a universal bond of brotherhood over secret alliances and balances of power.

## The Des Moines Register:

The first and most emphatic impression made by the league of nations covenant that has been completed by the commission under President Wilson's chairmanship is its sober practicality, its courageous and

intelligent dealing with obstacles, its strict adherence to the purpose of abolishing war.

## The Indianapolis Daily Times:

To-day a world nation is a reality, although somewhat nebulous. After long and troublesome centuries the end of war actually is in sight.

## The Indianapolis Star:

The constitution of the league of nations certainly has every promise of being a long step toward the abolition of war and the

## The Hague and the League of Nations

## How the Documents Framed for World Control and War Prevention Differ

## From the Proposed Constitution of the League of Nations

OBLIGATIONS to notify league executive of all disputes likely to lead to war.

Obligation not to resort to war without previously submitting dispute to arbitration. Declaration of war must be delayed three months after receiving award.

Establishment of permanent court of arbitration. Details to be formulated by league executive council.

Breach of covenant to be punished by diplomatic, trade and financial boycott.

International military and naval force, to be constituted as emergency armies, from national contingents as determined by league executive council.

Reduction of national armaments to lowest point consistent with national safety.

Restrictions on and final prohibition of private traffic in munitions and implements of war.

Full publicity of armament programme.

Pledge to respect territorial integrity and independence of league members.

In case of dispute between member-state and non-member-state, the latter to be invited to accept obligations of league membership for the purposes of such dispute.

Automatic abrogation of all international obligations between members inconsistent with terms of covenant.

## Measures Enacted at Hague Peace Conference, 1907

IN CASE of serious disagreement and dispute, before an appeal to arms, the contracting powers agree to have recourse, as far as circumstances allow, to the good offices or mediation of one or more friendly powers.

Good offices and mediation undertaken either at the request of the contending parties or at the initiative of powers strangers to the dispute have exclusively the character of advice and never have binding force.

Acceptance of mediation should not delay preparation for war.

In cases where neither honor nor vital interests of the nations are concerned an international commission of inquiry should be appointed, as far as circumstances allow.

A permanent court of arbitration

should be instituted at The Hague, with competency in all arbitration cases, unless the parties agree to institute a special tribunal.

The competency of the permanent court of arbitration extends

1. To cases where a "compromise," stating the dispute clearly and agreeing to subject it to arbitration, is signed by the contending parties;

2. To cases covered by treaties of arbitration;

3. To cases where contract debt is claimed from one power by another as due to its nationals.

The award of the court of arbitration or special tribunal is binding only if the parties have signed a "compromise."

Contracting powers agree not to have recourse to armed force for the recovery of contract debts claimed from one government by another as due to its nationals. This obligation becomes void if offer of arbitration is refused or left unanswered.

Hostilities must not be opened without due warning.

The jurisdiction of the permanent court of arbitration may be extended to cases between a contracting and a non-contracting power, or between two non-contracting powers, provided parties concerned agree.

Many Editorial Pages Seem Reluctant to Express Their Opinion Without More Ample Information

assurance of a reign of peace and justice.

## The Springfield Republican:

Will it work? is the question. Only experience may answer; let the experiment be made.

## The Boston Herald:

Take it all in all this plan for a league of nations may well raise high the hope of humanity for a long and happy period of peace and good will among men.

## The Louisville Courier-Journal:

A hasty survey of it leaves the impression that it would be workable through the medium of extensive and intricate machinery and at the cost of much of the national individualism of the signatory powers. And if workable, and at such cost, it ought practically to abolish war from the world.

## The Wilmington (Del.) Morning News:

The success of the plan depends largely upon the good faith of the subscribing members. They bind themselves to this plan of arbitration and the court of justice. There is no reason to question the sincerity of the present members of the league.

## The Topeka Capital:

The league as a growth rather than an attempt outright to establish disarmament and a forced peace once for all is the decision, and most people will say that it was probably the surest, as it is the safest, policy.

## The Boston Evening Transcript:

"Premier Clemenceau was especially cordial" in his congratulations to President Wilson, the correspondents tell us in their cables to-day. And why not? For the principle of "the balance of power" for which France's "Tiger" has been fighting is preserved in and protected by the terms of the twenty-six articles. The proposed alliance merely sets up "a new balance of power" with America as the new Ally.

## II. It Will Not

## The Portland (Me.) Press:

Divorcing the league of nations idea from politics; sifting the whole thing down to a common sense basis, what does it amount to as it has been proposed? Before we commit ourselves to it as a government, we ought to know what it may lead us into. It is said to point the way to eternal peace. Who knows if it does not point the way to perpetual war?

## The Savannah News:

If every other fellow agreed solemnly and kept the agreement to inform every other fellow whether he had a gun on his hip or not and if it was loaded, and how much extra ammunition he had and whether or not he had any differences with anybody else, and all about those differences, and would promise to wait till the differences had been fully submitted to a set of impartial referees before he even thought about shooting and would abide by the decision of the referees—there might not be any shooting.

## The Detroit News:

Of course a satisfactory league of nations will not result. Satisfactory to whom? In our own country, which, as being nearest and most familiar, furnishes the best chance for observation, has any big thing ever been accomplished that was immediately and unanimously proclaimed satisfactory? Make a few tests of some of the biggest and best achievements now recorded in history.

## The Philadelphia Ledger:

The practical "man in the street" will be asking himself, "Would this arrangement have stopped the Kaiser?"

## III. The Document Itself

## The Baltimore American:

Practically all the diplomatic and international experiences of the world have been drafted upon to frame this covenant between the peoples that will stand out as the most important document in its aims that the world has ever witnessed. Without regard for its full practicability, its meaning, its purpose and its aims are sublime. Idealism finds practical insurance and humanity is invited to see the formation of a world court of justice and arbitration.

## The Buffalo Courier:

While the constitution of the society of nations may be criticised by the extremists who wanted the creation of an "International State," and may be attacked by those conservatives who object to the use of outside national forces in international affairs, on the whole it is a very able docu-

ment and marks a great step forward in the world's international relations.

## St. Louis Globe-Democrat:

It erects no super-state. It demands the surrender of no material sovereignty. It creates no military power. It is, in brief, an agreement of cooperation for the preservation of peace and the promotion of universal welfare.

## The State (Columbia, S. C.):

We believe, as we have said, that the constitution of the league of nations is the greatest, most nobly conceived, document and charter of rights in all history. It is not only what we used to style a palladium of the peoples' rights, but it is a tremendously powerful instrument with the concentrated and determined power of 1,200,000,000 people behind it, to protect the peoples' rights against the world—against even themselves.

## The Asheville Citizen:

The average reader must have been struck by the simplicity of a document which involves such far-reaching questions, and which will practically rewrite the history of the world. Its aims and purposes were not enshrouded in ambiguous phrases, nor were the main issues lost sight of in rhetorical flights. It is, as the President described it, a "very human document."

## The Lynn Item:

On the surface, it is the Magna Charta of the democratic nations of the world.

## The Memphis Commercial Appeal:

After a hasty reading one sees that the plan is modeled chiefly along old lines. It has in it some other features of the league of peace proposed by the Czar, later formed and having its home at The Hague in a temple provided by Andrew Carnegie.

Some of the paragraphs remind one of the agreements that were made in the Berlin conference; other paragraphs are based upon suggestions made at the congress of Vienna, and still others hark back to the middle ages.

## Fond Du Lac (Wis.) Commonwealth:

The world's new peace pact marks the beginning of a new epoch in history. It ranks up with and by many will be held to outrank those other three historic documents—the Magna Charta, the American Declaration and the Rights of Man declaration. To President Wilson, who has stood for a league of nations first, last and all the time, who has carried his cause to the peace table and won, the world should be truly grateful. His has been a service of incalculable value to humanity.

## The Utica Press:

Much depends upon how it will be received by the peoples of the various nations which are to comprise the league. The success of the organization will depend upon the support which will be given by public opinion. The league is inaugurated under favorable auspices. The nations feel the need of a power such as it contemplates.

## The Bridgeport Times:

It is the function of statesmanship to know not only what change is necessary, but when the hour of change is ripe. President Wilson has measured to the definition in each particular. He is the father of the first world state. He is the father of permanent peace. He is the inspired citizen who brings to man realization of one of its fondest and profoundest hopes.

## What Shall We Have to Give Up?

## The New Orleans Item:

To the people of the United States there will come the practical question of what we will have to give up of our sovereignty, our national rights and privileges in order to join.

The question is open to debate and should be debated fully and freely without passion or prejudice. A cursory reading of the document indicates to us that there is one contingency only in which we might have war forced on us—that would be in case we stood in dispute with another nation and the executive council of the league stood unanimously against us. That such a contingency might arise seems to us to be almost inconceivable.

## The Kansas City Times:

The league of nations in the proposed plan becomes in a measure a superstate. It involves a real surrender of national sovereignty. As has repeatedly been said, the

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